DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 179 072 FL 010 453

AUTHOR Thypin, Marilyn; Glasner, Lynne
TITLE More Food for Our Money: Food Planning and Buying.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 57p.; Photographs may not reproduce clearly
AVAILABLE FROM EMC Corporation, 180 East Sixth Street, Saint Paul, MN 55101 ($3.50)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Consumer Economics; *Consumer Education; *English (Second Language); *High Interest Low Vocabulary Books; *Language Instruction; Postsecondary Education; Purchasing; Reading; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Materials; Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

This high interest low vocabulary reader is part of a consumer education series to be used in adult English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Each page of text is illustrated with black-and-white photographs. (AMH)

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More Food For Our Money

Food Planning and Buying

by

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Ira Berger

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FL010453

EMC Corporation, St. Paul, Minnesota

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Thypin, Marilyn
More food for our money.

(Consumer education series 1)
SUMMARY: A young married couple demonstrate the wrong and right ways to shop for food in a nutritious and economical fashion.
1. Marketing (Home economics)—Juvenile literature. 2. Food—Juvenile literature. 3. Nutrition—Juvenile literature. [1 Marketing (Home economics) 2. Food. 3. Nutrition]
I. Glasner, Lynne, joint author. II. Berger, Ira. III. Title. IV. Series.
TX356.G53 641 78-13591
ISBN 0-88436-502-6

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Published by EMC Corporation
180 East Sixth Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
Printed in the United States of America
0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

This is a work of fiction. Any relationship between the people, places, products, and events in this book and real people, places, products, and events is coincidental.

CHAPTER 1

Ted and Karen have been married for one year. They both have jobs. Ted works in an office. Karen works in a factory. Every week Karen does the food shopping. She goes to the supermarket on Thursday nights. She buys enough food for the whole week.

Both Karen and Ted make money. But they have to be careful with their money. They want to save some of it.

This week Karen has to work late at the factory every day. She wants Ted to go to the supermarket. She wants him to buy the food for the next week.

"The factory is very busy this week," Karen tells Ted. "I have to work late every night. I'm tired."

"I know how you feel," says Ted. "I get tired when I have to work late too."

"Will you have to work late tomorrow?" Karen asks Ted.

"No," says Ted.

"Good," says Karen. "Can you do the shopping?"

"OK," Ted says. "That's easy. I'll do it."

Then Karen gives Ted the shopping list. She makes a list every week. She thinks about what they will eat for the next week. She writes down the food that they will need. She does not want to forget anything. She wants to get the most food for their money. She wants to be a good consumer.

"Why do I need this list?" Ted asks. "I know what to buy."

"You might forget some things," Karen tells him. "You might buy the wrong things. Please take the list with you."

"I won't forget anything," says Ted.

Then Karen points to something on the list. "Don't forget the soap," Karen says. "It's on sale this week. We need it."

"OK, OK," Ted says. "I said that I'd do the shopping."

Ted puts the list in his pocket. Then he turns on the TV. He doesn't think about the shopping anymore. He will do the shopping tomorrow.

"I'll think about the shopping when I am in the supermarket," Ted thinks. "It will be easy to do."

CHAPTER 2

The next day Ted comes home from work. He finds the shopping cart. He takes it with him to the supermarket.

"There's Food Fair supermarket around the corner," Ted thinks. "It's near here. I'll go there."

Karen did not tell Ted which supermarket to go to. She knows that the food at the Food Fair supermarket costs a lot of money. She usually goes to a different supermarket. It is called Food Mart.

Ted goes into the supermarket. He puts his own shopping cart on the store's shopping cart. Then he looks in his pocket. He wants to find the shopping list. He can't find it.

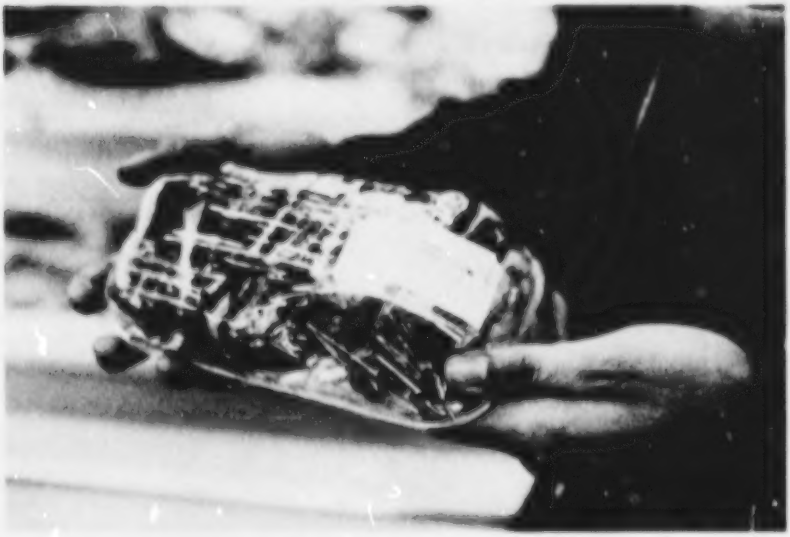
"Oh well," Ted thinks. "I forgot the shopping list. But I'll remember everything. I'll show Karen that I am a good consumer."

Ted starts to do the shopping.

First Ted sees the meat. He thinks, "What do I want for dinner tonight? I like ribs. I'll get some ribs for tonight."

Ted puts some ribs in his shopping cart. Then he looks at the other meats. He wants to buy meat for the whole week. He puts some more meat in the shopping cart.

Ted picks up a steak. It looks good. But it costs too much money. He puts the steak back. He would like to have steak sometime soon.



Ted walks around the supermarket. He tries to remember what was on the list. He sees the cookies.

"These cookies are good. I'll get some."

Ted puts two bags of cookies in the shopping cart.

"I like to eat cookies when I watch TV," Ted thinks."I hope that Karen will like these cookies."

Next Ted sees the toothpaste. He remembers that they don't have any toothpaste at home. He sees the kind that they use. He puts it in the shopping cart. Ted also takes some shampoo. He wants to try this kind. He saw an ad for it on T.V. The man in the ad looked very good.

"I think that I'll try this kind of shampoo," Ted says to himself. "I want to look as good as the man on TV."

Ted looks at the health and beauty shelves. He sees some other things.

"We need these things," Ted thinks. "I'll get them now. Then I won't have to go to the drugstore."

Ted walks down the next row. There are lots of cans on the shelves. There are cans of vegetables and fruits. Ted sees big cans and small cans on the shelves. He doesn't know if he should buy big cans or small cans. He thinks that the big cans are too big for Karen and him.

Ted picks out some cans. He takes four small cans of peas. He puts them in the shopping cart. Then he takes three small cans of peaches. He puts them in the shopping cart. He likes peaches.

Then Ted stops for a minute.

"What else should I buy," he thinks. "What else was on the shopping list? I wish that I had the list."

Ted does not remember what was on the shopping list. There were so many things on it. He is upset. He does not want to forget anything. He does not want to have to shop again this week. He looks around the store. He tries to remember what Karen put on the shopping list.

Ted remembers that cottage cheese was on the shopping list. Ted doesn't know where it is in the supermarket. He sees a clerk. Ted walks toward him.

"Can I ask the clerk where the cottage cheese is?" Ted thinks. "Will he think that I am stupid?"

Ted decides to ask the clerk. He has to buy some cottage cheese. "Where is the cottage cheese?" Ted asks the clerk.

The clerk points. "It's over there, with the dairy foods," he says. "It's on sale today."

"Thank you," Ted says. "What else is on sale today?"

"Frozen TV dinners," the clerk says.

"Where are they?" Ted asks.

"Around the corner, on the other side," the clerk tells Ted.

"Thank you again," Ted says with a smile.

"The clerk is nice," Ted thinks. "He helps people. Shopping isn't hard. I'm going to buy a lot of things on sale."

First Ted gets the cottage cheese. He is glad that it is on sale. He thinks that Karen will be happy.

Then Ted goes to the frozen foods. He finds the TV dinners. They look good. He likes them. He often eats TV dinners at his friend's house. He sees the brand that he ate at his friend's house last week. He liked that brand. Ted takes a few boxes of TV dinners and puts them in the shopping cart.

"Maybe we can have some TV dinners tomorrow," Ted thinks. "I wonder why Karen never buys TV dinners. They are easy to cook. They would be good when both of us have to work late."

Ted walks down the row. He sees some other things. He thinks that these things were on the shopping list. He puts them in the shopping cart.

Finally Ted thinks that he has everything. He goes to the check out counter. He wants to pay for the food. The line is long. Many people also want to pay for their food now. Ted has to wait.

There are many things to buy near the line. Ted looks at a magazine. Then he sees some candy. He wants some candy now. He takes a box of candy and opens it up.

Soon it is Ted's turn to pay. The clerk looks at the prices on all the cans and boxes. Then she rings them up. Ted does not watch what she is doing. It takes a long time. She must ring up every price. When she is finished, she tells Ted how much the bill is.

Ted is surprised. The food costs a lot of money. He is lucky. He has enough money with him.

Ted pays the clerk. He puts the food in his shopping cart. He starts to go home.

On the way home. Ted remembers the soda. He wanted to have something to drink for their friends. They are coming to his house on Saturday night.

"Darn it," Ted thinks. "I forgot to buy soda."

Ted does not want to go back to the supermarket. He doesn't want to stand in line again. He passes a small store. He goes in. He buys the soda there. Then Ted walks home. He is glad that he doesn't have to do anymore shopping today.

Ted comes home. Karen is not home yet. Ted takes off his coat and sweater. He sits down for a little while. Then he remembers that he should put the food away. He starts to take the food out of his shopping cart.

Soon Karen comes home from work.

"I'm glad that you did the shopping," Karen says. "Did you get everything on the list?"

"Sure," Ted answers. "I got everything. I didn't even need your list."

"Where is the shopping list?" Karen asks.

"I lost it," Ted tells her. "But I remembered everything."

Karen takes off her coat. Then she helps Ted. He is still putting the food away. Karen looks at the things that Ted bought.

"I see that you forgot the soap," she says. She is angry that he forgot the shopping list. She worked on it for a long time. She remembers that the soap was on the list.

"If you had the shopping list, you would have bought the soap," Karen tells Ted. "This week we will need some soap. We don't have any left."

Ted feels bad. He thought that he had bought everything on the list.

Then Karen looks at the bill. Ted spent a lot of money. And he did not buy all of the right things. They did not need the cookies. They did not need some of the other things that Ted bought in the supermarket. Karen is very upset.

"You didn't get very much for your money," she tells Ted. "Sometimes, things cost less, like ribs. But you don't get a lot for your money. You have to pay for the bones. There isn't enough meat on them. You have to buy a lot of ribs for our dinner. And that costs a lot more money."

Karen puts away the cans of food. Ted wants to put the meat away. He knows that meat can go bad if it is in the refrigerator for a long time. It must go in the freezer. Ted puts some of the meat in the refrigerator. They will eat this meat today or tomorrow. Then Ted puts some special paper around the rest of the meat. He puts this meat in the freezer.

"You sure bought a lot of cookies," Karen says.

"Yeah. I was hungry," Ted says.

Karen laughs. "But you bought two bags,"she says."That is not very smart. You should not shop when you are hungry. You buy too many things and you don't need all of them."

"I did not buy too much," Ted says. "We'll eat it all."

"Yes, but you didn't buy all of the right things," Karen says. "We won't have enough food to eat for the whole week."

"I think we will," Ted says.

"I don't think so," Karen says. "And you spent a lot of money."

Ted doesn't say anything. He puts away some more cans.

Karen does not want to nag Ted. But doing a good job with the shopping is important.

Karen sees that Ted got some cottage cheese. "I'm glad he got this cottage cheese," she thinks. That was on the list.

Ted sees Karen smile at the cottage cheese. He knows she likes it a lot. He's glad he bought it.

Ted takes some more things out of the shopping cart.

CHAPTER 3

During the next week, Karen had to go grocery shopping again. They did not have enough food to eat. Karen thinks that Ted does not know how to buy food the right way. She decides that she will show Ted how to shop in the supermarket. They will do the shopping together on Saturday.

On Saturday morning, Karen tells Ted how she shops for food.

"Don't make such a fuss," Ted tells Karen.

"But I want a lot of good food for our money," Karen says. "And I don't want to spend a lot of money."

"I did a good job," Ted says. "Food costs a lot of money."

"I know," Karen says. "But I can get more food for the same money."

"I bet that you can't," Ted says.

"OK. It's a bet!" Karen says.

Karen wants to show Ted how to be a good consumer. She tells him about her shopping list. Before going shopping, she makes a list of what they need.

"I make this shopping list during the week," Karen says. "When we need something, I write it down. I also decide what to cook for dinner every night."

"Let's have chicken this week," Ted says. "We haven't had it for a long while."

Karen puts chicken on the shopping list.

"OK," she says. "Now we will remember to buy some chicken."

Karen shows Ted the shopping list. She tells him what she is planning for dinner for the next week. She asks Ted if he likes these dinners. Ted says that they are OK with him.

Then Karen says, "What else should we buy at the supermarket?"

"Mary and Joe are coming over tomorrow," Ted says. "Should we buy something for them to eat?"

"Yes," Karen says. "I think that I'll bake a cake."

Karen looks at the cookbook. She wants to know what she needs for the cake. She writes it down on her shopping list.

Then Karen looks at the newspapers. She shows Ted the ads from the supermarkets.

"Food Mart is having a lot of specials today," she tells Ted.

Ted looks at the ad.

"Yes," Karen tells him. "It's a good sale. The food at Food Mart usually costs less money than the food at Food Fair. The food at Food Fair costs a lot of money. You went to an expensive supermarket."

"OK. Let's go to Food Mart today," Ted says.

"Good," Karen says.

"I'm ready to go," says Ted.

"I'm not ready," says Karen. "I have something else to do."

Karen looks for the coupons in the newspaper. She sees a coupon for toilet paper. Karen and Ted need some toilet paper. Karen cuts out this coupon. She will take it with her to the supermarket. Then she sees another coupon. This one is for a cake mix. She decides that she will use cake mix. It will save time and money. She cuts out the coupon. She crosses the things for the cake off her list.

Then Karen gets her other coupons. They came in the mail. She looks at them. Some of these coupons are for things on her shopping list. She will take these coupons with her too. She leaves the rest of them home.

Karen shows the coupons to Ted.

"These coupons will save us some money," she tells him. "This coupon is for a can of peas. Now the peas will cost 10 cents less than the store's price."

Karen is happy. She thinks that she will win the bet.

Karen and Ted get ready to go to Food Mart. Ted gets the shopping cart. Karen takes the shopping list and the coupons.

First they walk around the corner. They see the ads in the window of the Food Fair supermarket.

"These prices look very good," Ted says.

"Yes, they are," Karen says. But we don't need those things."

Then they walk past a little store. Ted bought some soda there last week. Karen tells Ted that the food in this small store is expensive.

"But I forgot to buy soda at the supermarket," Ted says. "I didn't want to go back to the supermarket."

"One day I needed some butter," Karen says. "The supermarkets were closed. I had to pay more money for butter in this store."

"Is food always more expensive in small stores?" Ted asks.

"No," Karen says. "But you have to look more carefully at the prices in a small store than in the supermarket."

CHAPTER 4

Ted and Karen walk to the bus stop. They have to take a bus to Food Mart.

"Will we still save money if we take the bus?" Ted asks.

"I think so," Karen answers.

Ted doesn't think so. The bus costs money. They will have to add the cost of the bus money to the bill from the supermarket.

On the bus, Karen thinks that she will win the bet. Ted also thinks that he will win the bet.

Soon Ted and Karen get to Food Mart. They start to shop. Karen takes out the shopping list. They look at it. They want to remember what they need. They don't want to buy too much. They don't want to buy things that are not on the list.

"Let's start with the meat," Karen says.

Ted looks at the meat. He picks out some hamburger patties. He wonders if they are expensive.

"Don't get that," Karen tells him. "It costs more money to buy meat like that."

"Why?" Ted asks.

"The supermarket has to make the patties," Karen says. "If we buy hamburger patties, we have to pay for their work. We can make the patties by ourselves. We don't have to pay the store to make them."

Karen takes a package of ground meat.

"The meat in this package will make a lot of hamburgers," she says.

Ted looks at the prices on both packages. He sees that the package of ground meat costs $1.39 for one pound. He can make four hamburgers from that package.

Then Ted looks at the hamburger patties. There are four patties in the package. It is one pound of ground meat. It costs $1.69.

"These hamburger patties do cost more money," Ted thinks. "Patties costs much more than ground meat."

Ted puts the package of ground meat in the shopping cart.

Then Ted looks at the chicken.

"Chicken is on our list," Ted says. "What should we buy?"

"We could buy a whole chicken," Karen says. "Or we could buy drumsticks."

"Which is cheaper?" Ted asks.

"The whole chicken," Karen answers.

"OK. Then let's buy one." Ted says.

"But we only like drumsticks," Karen says. "We'll have to throw out the rest of the chicken. We should only buy what we will eat."

"But you said that the whole chicken is cheaper," Ted says.

"Drumsticks are better for us because we won't eat the whole chicken," Karen says.

Ted thinks, "This package costs more money than a whole chicken. But we will eat all of it."

Then Ted thinks about his TV dinners. They were chicken dinners. They cost a lot of money.

Karen puts the chicken parts in the shopping cart.

Then Karen and Ted look at their list again. They want to buy some fresh fruits and vegetables.

"Let's get some fruit," Ted says.

Karen looks at the apples. It is winter. There are a lot of apples in the store now. She heard on the radio that apples are cheap in the winter. She wants to buy some.

Then Ted sees some corn. He knows that corn grows in the summer. It is expensive in the winter.

Karen and Ted do not buy any fresh corn.

"Why don't we buy frozen vegetables?" Ted asks. "I think they are cheaper."

"Yes," Karen tells him. "Sometimes frozen vegetables are cheaper than fresh vegetables."

"Then why do you buy fresh vegetables?" Ted asks.

Sometimes fresh vegetables are better for you," Karen says. "Sometimes they cost less than frozen vegetables."

Fresh vegetables are best when you buy them in-season. "In-season" is during the time when they grow. Fresh vegetables taste better and cost less when you buy them in-season."

Karen and Ted walk down the next row. Ted sees candy on the shelves. He wants to buy some. He starts to take some. Karen pulls him away.

"What are you doing?" she asks.

"I'm getting some candy," Ted says. "It's for Joe and Mary. They're coming over tonight, remember?"

"They don't want candy," says Karen. "I'm making a cake for them."

"Then we can get some for me," Ted says.

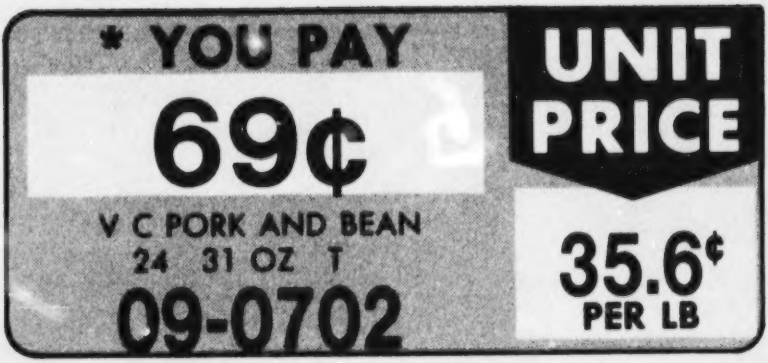
"No, we don't need candy," says Karen. "It's not on our list. Candy is expensive."

"OK, OK," Ted says. "You win. No candy."

Then Karen shows Ted an important sign. This big sign tells the consumer about unit pricing. Unit pricing helps people to get the best price for food. There are little signs on each shelf in the supermarket. These signs tell how much food costs per package with one pound or quart in it. Unit means one. The consumer can also look at the different sizes and the different brands. Then the consumer can see which package is the cheapest.

Ted reads the big sign.

Then Karen and Ted walk to the shelf where the pork and beans are. Pork and beans are on their shopping list. They will use the little signs on the shelf.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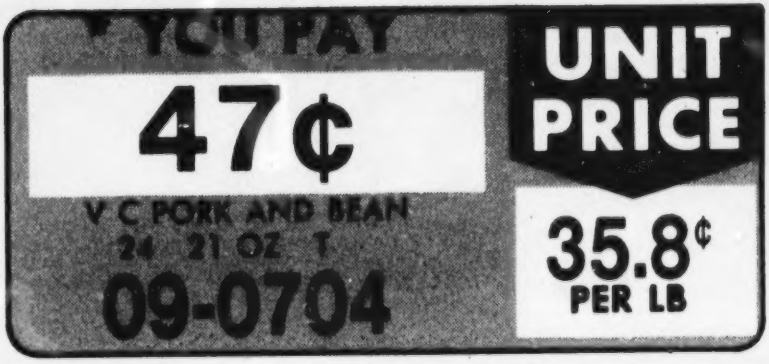
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The cans of pork and beans are different sizes. The signs on the shelves tell Karen and Ted which size costs less money for one pound.

"This small can is 21 ounces," Karen says. "This big can is 31 ounces. The signs tell us how much each can would cost if it was one pound. Then we can tell which size is cheaper."

"The big can is cheaper," Ted says. "It costs less for one pound than the smaller can. Let's get the big can."

"OK," says Karen. "We eat a lot of pork and beans."

Then Karen sees some cans of beets. Some cans of beets have the store's name on them. In this store it says Food Mart on the cans. Other cans of beets have different names on them. Karen has seen these brand names in the newspapers. Karen knows that the Food Mart cans are usually less expensive than the others.

Karen and Ted look at the unit pricing signs on the shelf. The signs tell them which size costs less money for a pound. Karen wants to make sure that these Food Mart cans are the best buy.

Ted looks at the shopping list again. He decides to get some soap. He forgot to buy it last week. He looks at the signs on the shelves.

"The largest box is the cheapest," he thinks. "I'll get this great big one. Karen will be happy. Now I'm a good consumer, too."

Karen looks at the shopping list again. Karen and Ted have put a lot of things in their shopping cart. Karen crosses them out on the shopping list.

Then Karen sees Ted. He looks funny with the big box of soap.

"That's enough soap for a year!" she thinks. She laughs.

"Look what I got!" Ted says. "I'm a good consumer. This box is the cheapest size. It cost less for one pound than the smaller boxes."

Then Karen remembers to buy some face soap. The ad in the newspaper said that one brand of face soap was on sale today at Food Mart. Karen likes that brand. She wants to buy a lot of it. Often, it saves them more money.

Karen and Ted find the right shelf. There are many brands of face soap on the shelf. Karen looks at them. The brand on sale is all gone.

Karen asks the clerk. "That brand is all gone," the clerk answers. The clerk walks away from Karen.

Karen is upset. She wanted to buy that brand of face soap. She likes it, and it was on sale today.

"Let's get the toilet paper now," Karen says.

"Don't you have a coupon for toilet paper?" Ted asks.

"Yes," Karen tells him.

They look at the different brands of toilet paper. They look at the unit price signs. The different brands of toilet paper are about the same price. But the coupon is only good for one brand. It will make this brand of toilet paper the cheapest. Ted puts that brand of toilet paper in the shopping cart.

Karen and Ted walk past the manager. He is talking to a customer. Karen can hear them. She listens. The man is angry. He wanted to buy some of the face soap, too.

The customer starts to get upset. The manager tells him that he does not have to get upset. The manager gives the man a paper called a rain check.

"Come back next week," the manager says. "Buy some of this soap. Give the clerk this paper. The paper says that this kind of soap is still on sale for you."

Karen thinks about the face soap, the manager, and the other consumer.

"I want a paper too," she thinks.

Karen wants to talk to the manager. She is afraid. But she is angry, too. She wanted to buy that brand of face soap. She decides to talk to the manager.

The manager is a nice man. He doesn't yell at her. He gives her a paper, too.

Now she can buy the soap next week. Then it will be on sale for her. Karen is happy that she talked to the manager.

Then Karen asks the manager, "Do you ever sell raw peanuts?"

"No, I'm sorry, says the manager. "We only sell peanuts in cans."

"I would buy raw peanuts," Karen says. She walks away from the manager.

The manager sits down. He thinks, "Someone else asked me for raw peanuts yesterday, too. Maybe I can get some. I'm glad that woman asked me."

Karen walks around the supermarket. She is feeling very good. The manager was nice to her. The manager helped her. The manager listened to her. Maybe she helped the manager, too.

Karen looks for Ted and the shopping cart. Finally she sees Ted near the cans of coffee. Today this brand of coffee is on sale. It is a very good price.

Ted wants to buy a can of this coffee. He talks to Karen about it. "This is a good price for coffee," Ted says.

"Yes, you're right," Karen says. "Let's buy two cans."

"But it's not on our list," Ted says.

"That's OK," Karen tells him. "It will stay fresh for a long time. We'll use it up. It will save us some money."

Karen always looks for good sales. When the food on sale will stay fresh for a long time, she buys a lot of it. Often, it saves them a lot of money.

The last thing on the list is cereal. Ted and Karen go to the back of the store. They look at the different brands of cereal. Ted picks out one box.

"Don't get that kind," Karen says.

"But I like this kind," Ted tells her.

"Yes, but it's not so good for you," says Karen. "It has a lot of sugar in it."

"How do you know what's in it?" Ted asks.

"Look here," Karen tells him. "This list on the box tells you what is in the cereal. The first thing on the list is sugar. That means that there is a lot of sugar in this cereal."

"So what?" Ted says.

Karen shows Ted another kind of cereal.

"This cereal is better for you," Karen says. "It has better things in it. Anyway, you should not eat so much sugar."

"OK, OK," says Ted. "Let's buy that cereal. Let's get out of here."

Finally, Ted and Karen are finished with their shopping. They walk to the front of the store. On their way, Karen sees some things for babies.

"Would you like to have a baby?" she asks.

"Now?" Ted says.

"Well, soon," she says.

"Yes," says Ted. "But we still have to save more money. It costs a lot of money to have a baby. And I want our baby to have everything it needs.

"I know," says Karen. "Saving to have a baby will be fun."

Ted and Karen wait in line. Then the clerk is ready to help them. Ted and Karen have bought a lot of things. The clerk tells them how much the bill is.

Ted gives some money to the clerk.

Then Karen gives some coupons to the clerk. The clerk makes sure that Karen bought the right things for the coupons. Then she gives Karen the money for the coupons.

Ted sees that the clerk is giving money back to Karen. Karen smiles.

"Boy, those coupons really do save us money," Ted says.

Ted and Karen leave the supermarket. Their shopping cart is full. It is hard to move. Ted pulls it to the bus stop. Karen is glad that Ted is with her today. She would have had a lot of trouble with this full shopping cart. It is hard to get a full shopping cart on the bus by herself. Karen usually goes to Food Mart with her friend.

"It is easier to go to the supermarket in Mary's car," Karen thinks. "I can't wait until we have a car. Then I can go shopping at any time. I will not have to wait for Mary."

Karen and Ted get on the bus. They sit down. Ted looks at the bill from Food Mart supermarket.

"I won the bet," he laughs. "We spent more money today. I didn't spend this much last week."

"Yes, but we had to buy more food during the week," Karen tells him. "You didn't buy enough food for the whole week. We have to add both of the bills from last week. Then I bet I will win."

Ted thinks for a minute.

"We'll see when we get home," Ted says. "I want to look at the bills."

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Ted and Karen go home. They put the food away. Then Ted gets the bills from last week. Karen and Ted look at them. Ted adds them up. They spent a lot of money last week. They spent a lot of money this week too.

"See?" Ted says. "The bills are almost the same."

"But look at all the food," Karen says. "We got more food for our money today. We bought coffee on sale. It will last for a long time. We also got a lot of soap. These things will last for more than one week. Today we were better consumers. We saved some money."

"I guess you are right," Ted says. "You win. I will cook dinner every night for a whole week!"

Karen smiles.